alter this *status quo*, which has lasted for 25 years in one case and for 71 years in the other.

4. We are informed that another application concerning these names has been submitted by Mr. N. D. Riley. It is based, as Lt.-Col. Cowan's, on the status of Linnaeus as first reviser. Yet the two authors fail to agree as to the requisite names. As previously stated we base our application on the preamble of the Code (outlined above), which is superior to any of its provisions. The Commission cannot comply with Cowan's or Riley's requests without ignoring the established use of the names in the literature of the past 25 years. To do so would be a rejection of the principles of the Code.

For all the foregoing reasons as well as those in our memorandum in opposition to this application, we respectfully suggest that the applications be denied.

ADDITIONAL LITERATURE CITED

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COMMENT ON THE OBJECTIONS FORWARDED BY R. M. BAILEY TO THE PROPOSED SUPPRESSION OF *ELIPESURUS SPINICAUDA* SCHOMBURGK (PISCES). Z.N.(S.) 1825

(see volume 24, pages 353–355, volume 25, pages 133–134)

By Mariano M. Castex, S. J. (*Colegio maximo de San José, San Miguel, (E.G.S.M.), Argentina*)

I have gone through with great interest the objections forwarded by Reeve M. Bailey of the University of Michigan to the proposed suppression of *Elipesurus spinicauda* Schomburgk.

In his observations Bailey supports items 8(2), 8(3) and 8(6) but considers it inadvisable for the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to support items 8(1), 8(4) and 8(5), that is, the suppression of the generic name *Elipesurus* Schomburgk, 1843 and the specific name *spinicauda* for the purposes of the Law of Priority and the placement of both names in the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Names in Zoology.

Bailey, who has not published works on this group until now and whose experience as he states in his paper "is a limited field experience with the group in 1964 in the Río Guaporé (= Río Iténez) of the Madiera system", has founded his objections on findings "published elsewhere" which we have not been able to obtain. His conclusions identify *E. spinicauda* with *Trygon strogylopterus* Schomburgk, 1843 and both of these with *Disceus thayeri* Garman, 1913, this last identification being based on:

(1) the strong dermal spines greatly developed (with age) and disposed irregularly about the base of the tail,

(2) the complete covering of the pelvic fins by the pectoral disc,

(3) the absence of an anterior median prominence on the disc, and

(4) the slender and abruptly tapering tail, which he finds in the illustration of *Trygon strogylopterus* made by Schomburgk.

To this I find it necessary to offer the following objections:

(1) my studies have not been centred, as Bailey remarks, merely on the Southern waters of the continent, and outside the range of *Disceus thayeri*. For nearly a decade I have been working on specimens obtained from nearly all the great rivers of our Southern continent and I have also gone through all the major collections currently existing (New York, Washington, Río de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, La Plata, Sao Paulo, Paris, London, Leyden, Brussels, Frankfurt, Münich, East Berlin, and Harvard). Over 10,000 rays have been examined by me, covering not only South American waters, but also the Benoué system in West Africa.

(2) I do not accept that *Disceus thayeri* undergoes notable changes with age.

Fresh water sting-rays are polymorphic, their variability characterising each group. Nevertheless, specimens seem to maintain their colour and form all through their life, excepting only normal development of spines and alteration to their form (pectoral fins) by predacious fishes.

(3) We do not believe that Schomburgk's illustration is useful and well described, but it is interesting that a man of Schomburgk's experience should separate entirely, at generic level, *E. spinicauda* from *T. strogylopterus*.

(4) Bailey's reference to the strong dermal spines for *Disceus* is not acceptable as Potamotrygonids frequently have them also, especially in the Amazon system.

(5) As for the complete coverage of the pelvic fins, this can hardly be considered diagnostic since variability in the position of these fins is well illustrated in drawings and photographs of this curious group.

(6) We cannot accept the absence of an anterior median prominence of the disc as it does not appear clearly in Schomburgk's drawings of *T. hystrix* or *T. motoro*, nor in *T. strogylopterus*.

(7) My experience in *Potamotrygon* permits me to assert that tails cut off in any of the species of this genus achieve the form that *Elipesurus* possesses in Schomburgk's drawing.

(8) The position of the venomous spine in the drawing of *T. strogylopterus* is similar to that of *T. motoro*.

(9) The dorsal colour pattern of *E. spinicauda* is absolutely clear and is only referable to *P. reticulatus* or *P. brachyurus; Disceus* has quite a different pattern.

(10) The position of the eyes, so characteristic of *Disceus* is not thus shown in Schomburgk's drawing, nor in *T. strogylopterus*.

Therefore, I consider it necessary to maintain my position, identifying *E. spinicauda* with *P. brachyurus* and thus my request to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

As for the identification of *T. strogylopterus* with *Disceus thayeri* I consider this a matter of discussion in another paper as it does not refer to the present request and discussion.

Finally I wish to note that *Potamotrygon* is feminine as Bailey remarks and not neuter as I stated by mistake in the request mentioned. I had already published in 1963 a paper in which this was explained.[1]

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[1] Greek names in omega (ω) and nu (ν) belonging to the third declension are masculine and "trygon" is one of the few exceptions to the rule.